Good Company

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Summary: Piers reflects on the lives and deaths of his friends and companions. Post GSII, some spoilers.

Chapter 1: Good Company

Another oneshot request fic from Procne. Turned out differently than I hoped, so critique is appreciated.

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With a sigh, Piers went down into his wine cellar to fetch a bottle from a good year. After living a few hundred, he had a large enough collection to fill the Eastern Sea, it seemed like.

Piers had gone through and gotten past the "drinking to drown sorrows" phase, but still enjoyed a glass of fine wine every now and then. Too bad he only had his thoughts to keep him company.

And today they were taking a depressing turn, death being foremost.

And whenever he thought of death, he always remembered his mother, who died of a broken heart, in all senses of the phrase. Perhaps she would still be living, had he not been insensitive enough to delay his coming back so long. Perhaps not. Just one of those things he'd never get to know.

Just like he'd never know if any of his friends would have lived longer, had he been able to convince them to move to Lemuria.

He moved between rows of bottles, moving ever backwards in time.

Here was one from the year Sheba had died, last and oldest of his friends. He had 'disappeared' long before then, not

wishing to watch his friends grow old and die, one by one. He had gone to visit her on her deathbed, to bid a proper final and fond farewell to a bygone era of good friends and good times. Strange that after all their adventures, the thing that had killed the most of them had been old age, not some monster or freak illness.

Here was one from the year Isaac had passed away, the exception to the rule. So close to being the last one, a well placed monster's fang had ended his life quickly and hopefully painlessly. For some reason, his hair had not even yet grayed at the time of his passing. He had never readjusted to tranquil village life after their quests, so he had gone off traveling in search of someplace that would need a hero.

Here was one from the year Garoh was raided and Maha burned at the stake. Piers had received a visit from his son a few months later, given him some solace and support before he went forth, back into the unforgiving world.

Here was one from the date of Ivan's death. Ever good-natured to the end, he simply passed away overnight in his sleep. He had lived a full and satisfying life, and Piers was happy for him, even if grieved at his loss.

Here was one from the day Garet died. It had been a year after he had gone totally loopy, but the kind sort of crazy. He claimed to see people who were always pushing or pulling him around. No one else ever saw them, not even when Ivan and Sheba cast Reveal at the same time near him during one of his 'episodes'.

Here was one from when Jenna passed away, fiery to the last. Piers could believe that her dieing breath would be spent arguing some absurd point with one of the boys of

their group. One would think her purpose in life was to verbally beat them all into submission, but that would be inaccurate. She was never so happy as when engaged in some altercation with a friend.

Here was one from Mia's death. Fellow water adapt, and caretaker to all. She did not take so kindly to people fawning around her in her old age. She lived as long as other people needed her to, then died naturally when she became a burden to others. Truly altruistic in every act, death being no exception.

Here was one from the date Felix passed away. He had never been one to complain out loud, so his illness was only discovered a week before the end, when Sheba had been Mind Reading him during a prank. Nothing could be done, except make his last few days comfortable. Jenna never really did forgive him for dieing before her, but at least he did not have to watch his only sister die.

Here was one from the day of Hamma's death. It came after many years that the siblings had been able to spend together, building new memories to replace old ones that never happened. She had so simply gotten old, just couldn't live enjoyably anymore. From then it was only a matter of time until the end. Ivan had been with her to the very last moment.

Here was one from Kraden's death date. It was the first sign of the beginning of the end. Being the first of their companions to go, he was mourned with a total and united front of sorrow. Everyone knew there was so much more he could have accomplished, had he lived a few more years, but that could be said no matter how long he would have lived.

Here was one from the year the computer was invented, and later that same year Kraden had invented the Interweb. Thinking about the time Mia had discovered firsthand what fanfiction was brought a brief smile to Pier's face.

Here was one from the year they had found Alex under the rubble of Mt. Aleph in a deep coma. A coma he was still in now, looking not a day older than when they saw him last, centuries ago.

Finally he got to the one he wanted, one from a day, just like any other, when they had been happy and safe and together. Just one day of many so undistinguishable. One more than two centuries ago, but still crystal clear in his mind.

He picked it up and dusted it of, shivering slightly with the damp chill of the bottle.

These bottles were all he had now, them and the memories they contained. He had to make due with them in lieu of new experiences with old friends long gone. Piers knew that one day he would be gone as well, and with him the last living memory of their adventures. Their triumphs and sorrows, gone in an instant. All that would remain is the legend, if that even did not fade before he died.

There was a phase that Piers had considered suicide, but even in the depths of depression he could not forget all the joys that went with life stronger than the pains it entailed. He could not do it; he could not even bring himself to want to do it. He never regretted that choice, not for an instant.

As he worked his way back to the present through the ranks of bottles, he stopped at many, just to assure himself that he remembered every event that went with them. He would not

be able to stand it if he forgot one, if even one day slipped away.

Every now and then he would leave his secluded home and visit a town as a wandering storyteller. He had so many tales of such a range that people flocked to show up whenever word spread that he was in town. Something for everyone, and then some. It made him feel better that these people would hear their tales and maybe remember some, tell some to their children. Another way to assure the memories of his friends would live on. No one truly believed him to be the Piers of legend, and often he went by the name of Picard to encourage that belief. Things would come better from an outsider and, of course, who could live long enough to tell such stories from firsthand experience?

He could not do this very often, as he well learned. He had visited Madra once too often for too long, and was run out of town by people claiming him a demon of some sort for having such a long life. For a long time afterwards he had to be wary of people out for his blood, because they believed he had 'cursed' them, or got their cow sick or something. So he stayed away from large towns and come revisited a town only after he was assured they had forgotten his previous visit.

He kept living his life, with his wine and his memories, helping people when he could, but mostly remaining secluded. It was all he could do now, unless something new and important came along.

Besides, good company was so lacking nowadays.

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S'All. Thanks for reading. If you like any of the events in this story, tell me and I'll put out an expanded oneshot thingy of

it for you. Some are already in works, but I am trying to get back to Lavender Sorrow.

Reviewer Procne deserves credit for a lot of the ideas in this fic, special thanks to you.

See y'all later (I hope…).

-Kit